

LAWRENCE-DOUGLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

200 Maine, Suite B

Lawrence, Kansas 66044-1357

Office: 785/843-3060 Fax: 785/843-3161

Clinic: 785/843-0721 Fax: 785/843-2930

DATE: September 19, 2003

RELEASE: Immediate

CONTACT: Sharon Watson
Office of Public Information
Kansas Department of Health and Environment
(785) 296-5795

Outbreak of Cryptosporidiosis

The total number of laboratory-confirmed cases of cryptosporidiosis as of September 18 remains at 86 as there were no new confirmed cases reported September 17. The age range of infected persons is one through 70 years. Of the 86 laboratory-confirmed cases, 54, or 63 percent, are children age 18 and younger. Thirty-two, or 37 percent, are adults.

The number of laboratory-confirmed cases associated with day care facilities continues to grow. Of the 25 additional laboratory-confirmed cases identified last week, 19, or 76 percent of last week's cases, are associated in some way with day care facilities.

Within households and day care facilities we know that Cryptosporidiosis is easily spread person-to-person. In a typical day care setting, diapering, shared toys, lots of hand-to-mouth contact and incomplete hand washing allows transmission of the germ between children. Hand washing is the most effective means of preventing Cryptosporidium transmission. Wash hands regularly with soap and water, especially after using the bathroom and before preparing food. Ill persons should consult their healthcare provider if they are ill and need clinical advice for managing their illness.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment are assisting the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department in conducting an epidemiological investigation and developing recommendations for prevention and control of the Cryptosporidium outbreak in Douglas County.

- 30 -

Note to News Editor: There will not be a news briefing at the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department today. A press conference has been scheduled by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment for 3:00 p.m. at the Curtis Building - Suite 540 - 1000 SW Jackson, Topeka, Kansas.